

**REMARKS**

By this Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 4, and 5, and added new claims 6-10 merely to conform the claims to more conventional U.S. practice, thereby improving the form of the claims. Accordingly, claims 1-10 are currently pending in this application. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attachment is captioned, "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

**Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, Applicants amended the claims to place the application in better condition for examination. A favorable action on the merits is respectfully solicited.

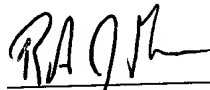
If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this preliminary amendment, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 as follows:

1. (Amended) A spark plug for an internal combustion engine [~~characterized in that the spark plug comprises~~] comprising:

a center electrode [~~comprising~~] including a basic body and a first tip [~~for the center electrode~~] joined to said basic body; and

a ground electrode [~~comprising~~] including a base[,], having an interlayer formed at a predetermined position of said base, and a second tip [~~for the ground electrode~~] joined to a surface of said interlayer,

wherein said first tip [~~for the center electrode~~] and said second tip [~~for the ground electrode~~] are disposed to face each other, said first tip [~~for the center electrode~~] and said second tip [~~for the ground electrode~~] are each made of Ir or made of an Ir alloy [~~chiefly composed of Ir~~],

wherein a thermal expansion coefficient of said interlayer is between a thermal expansion coefficient of said base and a thermal expansion coefficient of said second tip [~~for the ground electrode~~], said basic body and said tip for the center electrode are joined to each other according to laser welding, and said interlayer and said tip for the ground electrode are joined to each other according to electric resistance welding].

2. (Amended) The spark plug for an internal combustion according to Claim 1, wherein said first tip [~~for the center electrode~~] and said second tip [~~for the ground electrode~~] are each made of an Ir alloy [~~chiefly composed of Ir~~] that contains (1) Rh of 1.5 to 50 [mass] weight %, (2) Pt of 1 to 10 [mass] weight %, or Rh of 1.5 to 50 [mass] weight % and Pt or Ru of 1 to 10 [mass] weight %, and said interlayer is made of an Ir or Pt alloy [~~chiefly composed of Pt or Ir~~].

4. (Amended) The spark plug for an internal combustion according to Claim 1, wherein the whole surface of said interlayer is covered with said second tip [~~for the ground electrode~~].

5. (Amended) The spark plug for an internal combustion according to [~~any one of Claims~~] Claim 1 [~~through 4~~], wherein a good thermal conduction core is disposed in an interior of said base of said ground electrode.

Applicants added new claims 6-10.

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